



National
Qualifications
2026

2026 English

**Reading for Understanding, Analysis and
Evaluation**

National 5

Question Paper Finalised Marking Instructions

These marking instructions have been prepared by examination teams for use by Qualifications Scotland appointed markers when marking external course assessments.

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General marking principles for National 5 English: Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidate responses to questions in this paper. These principles must be read in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidate responses.

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the detailed marking instructions for this assessment.
- (b) Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.
- (c) If a specific candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.
- (d) Candidates should gain credit for their understanding of the ideas of the passage, and their analysis and evaluation of the writer's use of language.
- (e) Unless quoting from the passage, the candidates should use their own words as far as possible.

The following notes are offered to support markers in making judgements on candidates' evidence.

Marking instructions for each question

Question			Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
1.			Any two points.	2	Possible answers • ‘process’ glossed by eg it happens in stages (1) • “‘How old is very old?’” glossed by eg there is uncertainty over exactly when it begins (1) • “‘Thirty-seven’”/‘knows what to expect’ glossed by eg children have their own ideas about it/ think it starts young (1) • ‘creaky’/‘wobbly-wobbly’ glossed by eg physical decline/decreased mobility/loss of balance (1) • ‘consolation’ glossed by eg (however) there are good things/benefits (1) • “‘you get to play with little people like me’” glossed by eg you can have the chance to have fun with children (1) • ‘But not often enough’ glossed by eg there can be a lack of opportunities (to have fun) with children (1)
2.			Reference (1) Comment (1) x2	4	Possible answers • ‘charming (journey)’ (1) suggests eg pleasant/attractive (1) • ‘(journey of) discovery’ (1) suggests eg those involved will learn something new/find something out (1) • ‘very young . . . old age’/‘brought together’ (1) suggests eg people are introduced to each other/(there are) social benefits (1) • ‘to play . . . bonds’/ref to list/rule of three (1) emphasises the number and/or variety of benefits (1) • ‘play’/‘(have) fun’ (1) suggests eg the interaction is enjoyable for those taking part (1) • ‘(forge) bonds’ (1) suggests eg relationships/friendships (are formed) (1)

Question			Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
3.			Any five points.	5	Possible answers • ‘isolated for hours at a time in his room’ glossed by eg he is lonely/on his own/his life is monotonous (1) • ‘at the window’/‘viewing from a distance a world’ glossed by eg he is on the outside/a bystander (1) • ‘in which he once played a very active part’ glossed by eg he used to be really sociable/highly involved in things (1) • ‘veteran of the Second World War’ glossed by eg he fought/served in the (second world) war (1) • ‘amazed that his courage is seen as anything other than a job’/“We discovered we were part of history” glossed by eg he is modest/doesn’t boast/has a sense of duty (1) • ‘his courage’ glossed by eg he was brave (1) • ‘(recently) widowed’/‘he was married to Margaret for 66 years’ glossed by eg he had a wife/his wife has passed away/he and Margaret were together for a long time (1) • ‘They enjoyed ballroom dancing’ glossed by eg he used to like dancing with his wife/he had shared interests with his wife (1) • ‘he prefers to dance alone’/‘his embrace still reserved only for Margaret’ glossed by eg he misses his wife/doesn’t want anyone else to take her place (1) • ‘It’s like being in prison’ glossed by eg he feels trapped/shut in (1) • “What are you in here for, mate?”/‘he replies smartly’ glossed by eg he has a sense of humour/can be quick witted/can be sarcastic (1) • ‘He is waiting for the ‘Lark Hill taxi’ (the ambulance) to call for his final journey’ glossed by eg he is marking time until he dies (1)

Question			Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
					until, that is, we see him partnered with four-year-old Renee . . . Victor's drawing' glossed by eg mixing with a child has changed him/mixing with a child has given him a new lease of life/mixing with a child means he is now joining in (1)

Question			Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
4.			Any six points.	6	Possible answers • ‘to halt or reduce some of the physical . . . decline that can be associated with older people’ glossed by eg to slow/stop deterioration of older people’s bodies/maintain their level of fitness/strength (1) • ‘to halt or reduce some of the . . . mental decline that can be associated with older people’ glossed by eg to slow/stop deterioration of older people’s minds/maintain their levels of brain activity (1) • ‘memory . . . measured periodically’ glossed by eg to improve/to monitor mental recall of older people (1) • ‘mood . . . measured periodically’ glossed by eg to improve/to monitor mental outlook of older people (1) • ‘mobility . . . measured periodically’ glossed by eg to improve/to monitor agility/movement of older people (1) • ‘The impact . . . sociability’ glossed by eg to improve/to monitor the ability of young people to mix with other people (1) • ‘The impact . . . confidence’ glossed by eg to improve/to monitor the self-esteem/self-belief of young people (1) • ‘The impact . . . language’ glossed by eg to improve/to monitor the ability of young people to communicate (1) • ‘. . . experts lectures us’ glossed by eg give the views of professionals/give specialist information (1) • ‘(lectures us on) what we already know’ glossed by eg confirming existing ideas (1) • ‘stimulation . . . spark plugs of life’ glossed by eg to show that giving people something interesting to do is a good thing (1)

Question			Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
					• ‘positive challenges . . . spark plugs of life’ glossed by eg to show that setting demanding tasks is a good thing (1) • ‘rewarding relationships . . . spark plugs of life’ glossed by eg to show that fruitful friendships are good things (1) • ‘a treat for viewers’ glossed by eg to entertain the audience (1) • ‘magic unfolds’ glossed by eg to have an amazing effect/present something remarkable (1)
5.			Reference (1) Comment (1) x2	4	Possible answers • ‘resilience (personified)’/ ‘determined (to join in)’/ref to parenthesis/‘several tries’ (1) suggests/emphasises eg not giving up/needed more than one attempt/not put off/strength of character (1) • ‘wet grass’ (1) suggests eg tricky/slippery surface (1) • ‘unaided’/‘raise herself (from her mobility scooter)’ (1) suggests eg (managed to do something) without her usual assistance/independently (1) • ‘eventually’/‘gradually’ (1) suggests eg it took a long time (1) • ‘succeeds’/‘makes it’/‘reaching her goal’ (1) suggests eg she got there/target being met (1) • ‘She eventually succeeds.’/ref to short sentence (1) emphasises her accomplishment (1) • ‘helped by (a walking frame)’ (1) suggests eg required assistance (to move) (1) • ‘treacherous’ (1) suggests eg dangerous/frightening/extremely difficult (1) • ‘(like the) Sahara Desert’/ref to simile (1) suggests eg hostile environment/great distance (1) • ‘triumphantly’ (1) suggests eg celebrating (having accomplished something) (1)

Question			Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
6.			Any three points.	3	Possible answers • ‘they tended to be a central part’ glossed by eg they used to be seen as important (1) • ‘they tended to be . . . part of an extended family’ glossed by eg they used to be more included/member of a larger family (1) • ‘the segregation of the generations is accelerating’ glossed by eg now age groups have separate lives/are kept apart increasingly (1) • ‘ageism is rife’ glossed by eg there is a lot more prejudice against old people (now) (1) • ‘innovation in how we treat the later stages is sadly lacking’ glossed by eg there are no new good ideas about how to support old people (1)
7.			Reference (1) Comment (1)	2	Possible answers • ‘reminds us’ (1) suggests it confirms/reinforces (an important idea/example of an important idea) (1) • ‘hits’ (1) suggests eg powerful (1) • ‘what hits most at the heart’ (1) suggests eg an emotional response (1) • ‘blossom’ (1) suggests eg development/opening out (1) • ‘flourish’ (1) suggests eg reach potential/prosper (1) • ‘grow’ (1) suggests eg thrive/become more mature (1) • ‘invest (time and interest)’ (1) suggests eg input/commitment (1) • ‘crafting’ (1) suggests eg skilfully/carefully/taking time over creating (relationships) (1)

Question			Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
8.			Any one pair, OR two correct selections covering different directions, OR question and answer structure.	2	Possible answers • ‘(How can) this’/‘(How can) this model’/‘model’ links back (1) to ‘the (television) series’ OR ‘older people blossom’ OR ‘their capabilities are encouraged’ OR ‘four-year-olds to flourish’ OR ‘who generously invest time and interest’ OR paraphrase of any of the above (1) • ‘spread’ links forward (1) to ‘crowdfunding’ OR ‘500 centres for all ages’ OR paraphrase of any of the above (1) • ‘this model’ links back (1) ‘spread’ links forward (1) • the writer poses a question (1) and goes on to answer it (1)
9.			Selection (1) Comment (1) NB do not reward a response which simply says ‘it sums up the main ideas of the passage etc’ unless the candidate goes on to explain what the main idea is.	2	Possible answers • ‘Scarlett’/‘Victor’/‘Margaret’ (1) repeats reference to Scarlett/Victor/Margaret earlier in the passage (1) • ‘no longer with them’/‘(an experience of) loss’ (1) repeats the idea of ‘(recently) widowed’ (1) • ‘(as) Victor loved Margaret’ (1) refers back to earlier mention of their relationship (1) • ‘Victor is at the top of a hill . . . yet to climb’ (1) repeats the idea of growth/challenge which is one of the main ideas of the passage (1) • ‘what they have in common’ (1) sums up a main idea of the passage that there can be a connection between generations (1) • ‘its richness’ (1) repeats the idea of ‘journey of discovery’/‘rewarding relationships’/‘triumphantly reaching her goal’/‘great joy’/‘blossom’/‘flourish’/etc. (1)

Question			Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance
					• ‘the value of loving’ (1) repeats the idea of ‘brought together’/‘forge bonds’/‘his embrace’/‘rewarding relationships’/‘strikes up a friendship’/‘crafting old-fashioned friendships’/title etc (1) • reference to age(s)/‘Whether aged four, 37 or 97’ (1) refers back to earlier mention of the same age(s)/title (1) • ‘universal . . . lessons to learn’ (1) refers back to/sums up a main idea of the passage of the wide impact of the model/everyone is affected (1) • ‘valuable lessons to learn’ (1) repeats the idea of ‘journey of discovery’/‘discovered’/‘what we already know’/‘reaching her goal’/‘wisdom’/‘capabilities are encouraged’/‘grow in the company’/etc (1)

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]